April to June, 1999 was 6185.6 M.T. for a value of Rs. 7.84 crores as per the provisional import figures available with the Government. Indian marble industry is unlikely to be seriously affected by this level of imports. Marble is a minor mineral and the policy regarding development of this product is framed by respective State Governments. However, recently Department of Mines, Government of India, has constituted a Group on Marble Development, which will work under the supervision of the Granite Development Council, to look into the issues relevant to the development of marble mining and industry.

Export of Engineering Goods

1850. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the performance of his Ministry in the export of engineering goods during the last three years;

(b) whether there has been decline in the export of engineering goods in 1998-99;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor;

(d) the steps taken by Government to increase the export of engineering goods; and

(e) the target set for 1999-2000?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) The performance of Engineering Goods Exports during the last three years is as under:—

Year	Rs. Cr.	US $ Mn.
1996-97	14395.74	4055.00
1997-98	16478.68	4433.95
1998-99	16001.61	3803.51

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The major cause for negative trend in the engineering goods exports has been the continued unfavourable global economic condition particularly on account of economic/currency crisis in

South and East Asia, Russia and other East European countries as also in major Latin American countries. Fall in oil prices also had its impact on our exports to Middle East. Quite a number of items for which good export prospects exist in developed countries could not do well due to restrictive trade measures including anti dumping and anti-subsidy measures by these countries.

(d) The promotion of exports has been the constant endeavour of the Government. Measures to boost exports, including those from the engineering sector, consist of various provisions under the Export-Import Policy including Duty Exemption Scheme, Export Promotion Capital Goods Scheme, Special Import Licence, Duty Drawback Scheme, Exemption under Section 80 HHC of Income Tax Act, Assistance from Market Development Fund etc. Engineering goods exporters also received promotional support through various activities of the Engineering Export Promotion Council like participation in internationl engineering goods fairs, visit of engineering goods delegation abroad, Buyer-Seller Meets, Market Studies, organising specialised exhibitions in India etc.

(e) The target for Engineering Goods Sector for the year 1999-2000 is US $ Mn. 4550.

New Export Policy

1851. SHRI BRATIN SENGUPTA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a new policy of export is in the offing;

(b) what will be the feature of the new export policy; and

(c) what are Government's plans for increasing exports from our country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) The review of the export policy is an ongoing process. The amended Export-Import Policy is notified in the month of March every year. Accordingly, revised policy shall be announced before the commencement of the next financial year after considering various suggestions received from the Trade and Industry and various ministries and export promotion concern.

(c) Government had announced various measures on 31.3.99 to increase the competitiveness of Indian exports and to reduce the